

WASHINGTON, DC – Today, Rep. Pete Stark (D-CA) and several colleagues introduced a House Resolution expressing the sense of Congress that the federal government should make fair trade coffee available at all events and food services venues in the legislative branch and executive agencies. Stark's bill builds upon grassroots efforts to promote the use of fair trade coffee, including those at UC Berkeley, which now serves fair trade coffee in its cafeterias.

"As a nation that seeks to promote fairness and human rights across the globe, it is only right that we do something to ensure that small coffee farmers receive a fair price for the coffee they produce," Stark said. "In doing so, we can help improve the lives of millions of farmers and their families throughout the world."

Currently, many coffee farmers are receiving as little as 1% of the final retail price of the coffee that they produce, an amount that is nowhere near enough for farmers to cover the cost of production while simultaneously supporting their families. Extremely low coffee prices are forcing millions of farmers into debt, poverty, and unemployment and causing a massive refugee crisis. With the fair trade certification, coffee farmers throughout the world receive a fair market price of \$1.26 per pound for their coffee so that they can pay off their debts, provide for their families and contribute to their communities.

"It is time that Congress recognized that fair trade coffee is one step in solving the humanitarian emergency that has been caused by the coffee crisis," Stark continued. "This small piece of legislation requires very little on our part and yet would promote efforts to give a decent standard of living to small coffee farmers around the world. I urge my colleagues to join us in support of this effort."